



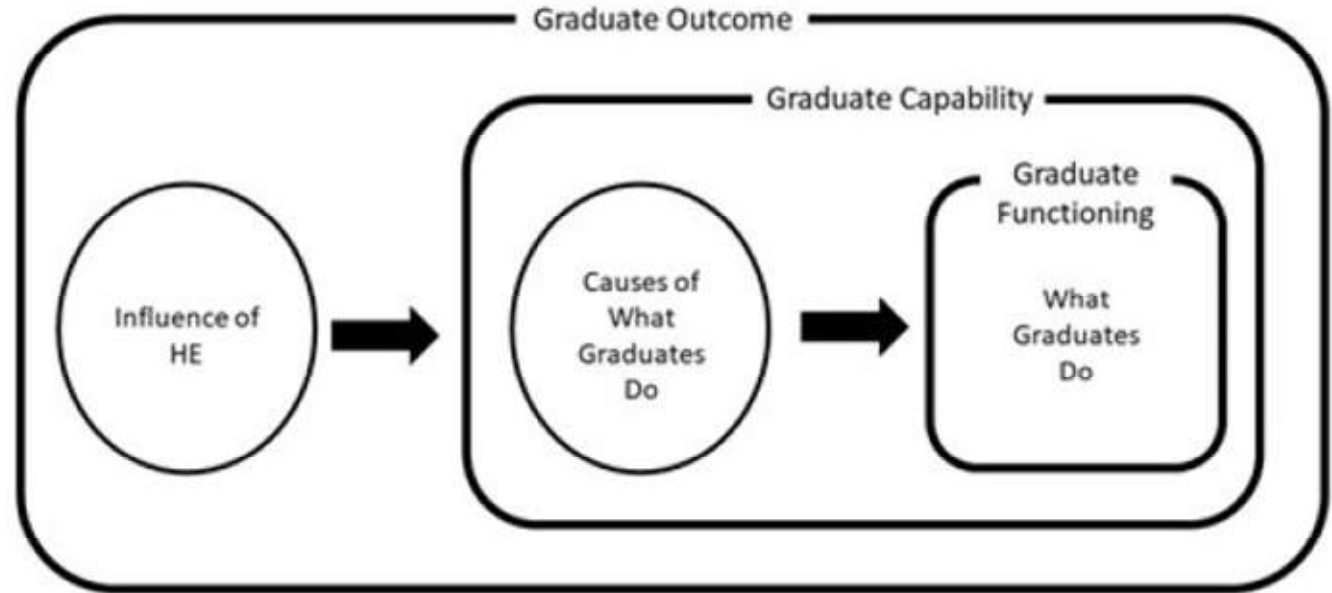
Transnational Graduate Outcomes: A Case Study of the United Arab Emirates

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What are graduate outcomes?

- Employment – job security, income, job satisfaction, skills use, professional development
- Wellbeing – life satisfaction, health, happiness, etc.
- International mobility
- Identity and relationships
- Learning – not a student experience survey



from Fryer, T. (2021). Conceptualising Graduate Outcomes with Critical Realism. *Higher Education Policy*, 1-16.

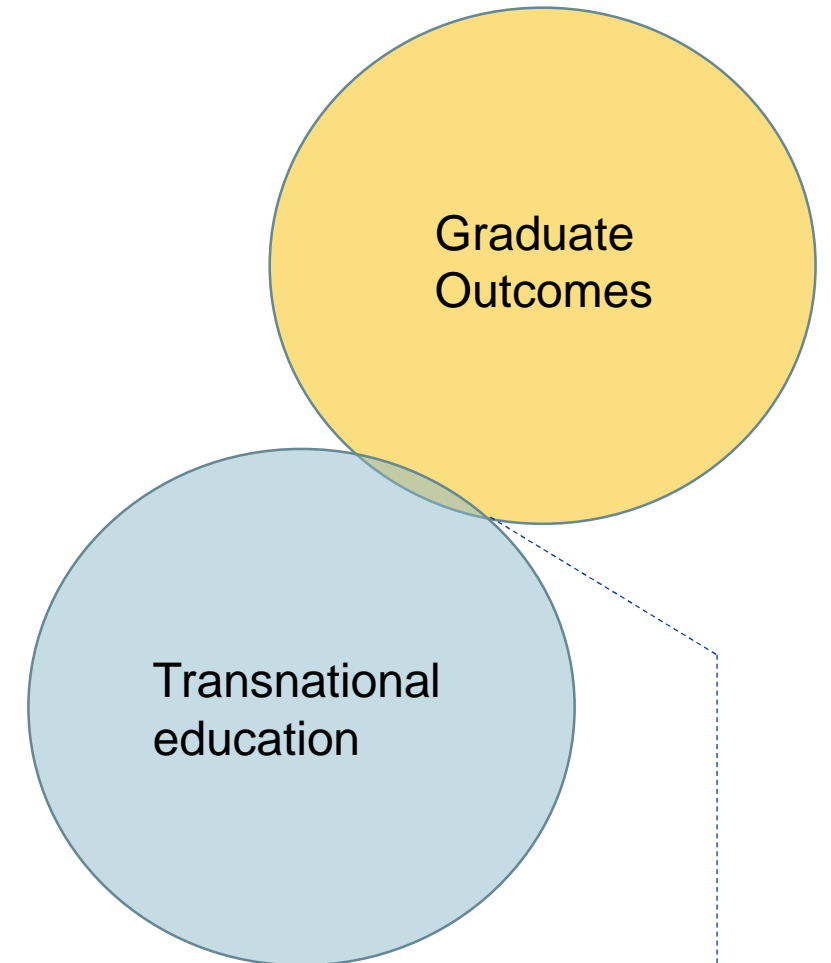
Graduate outcomes in TNE

Graduate outcomes research is

- (1) an established field of multidisciplinary research with developed methodologies
- (2) practised in one form or another by academics, universities, regulatory bodies, and nongovernment and privately owned research organisations
- (3) vital to policymakers (in and outside of education) and universities

TNE is

- (1) an established and expanding feature of the global higher education landscape
- (2) an increasingly important component of international trade in educational services
- (3) vital to the sector as a source of diversified revenue, growth, and opportunities for research and institutional learning.



- British Council & DAAD (2014)
- Mellors-Bourne, R., Jones, E., & Woodfield, S. (2015)
- Ilieva, J., Tsiligiris, V., Killingley, P., & Brandenburg, U. (2021)

Graduate outcomes in the United Arab Emirates

- Concentrated TNE market: 33 international branch campuses
- Strong UK presence: 9 established campuses, 4-5 franchised programmes and joint degree partnerships with local providers
- 38% of Dubai IBC enrolments are in UK providers (32% UG, 49% PG)
- Devolved regulatory frameworks for TNE



Research design: Mixed methods approach

Mixed methods approach:

- Quantitative online questionnaire (75-100 questions; 202 valid responses)
- Qualitative follow-up interviews (13 graduates from different providers, degree levels, and nationalities)
- Non-probability sample representing 1.25% of target graduate population

Collective, sector-wide analysis

Research design: Survey instrument

Functioning (what graduates do)

- Employment: job satisfaction, status, skills utilisation.
- Further study: Subject, institution, teaching mode.
- Wellbeing: Life satisfaction, financial situation.
- Attitudes and values: Generalised trust, inter-cultural communication, social support, international mobility

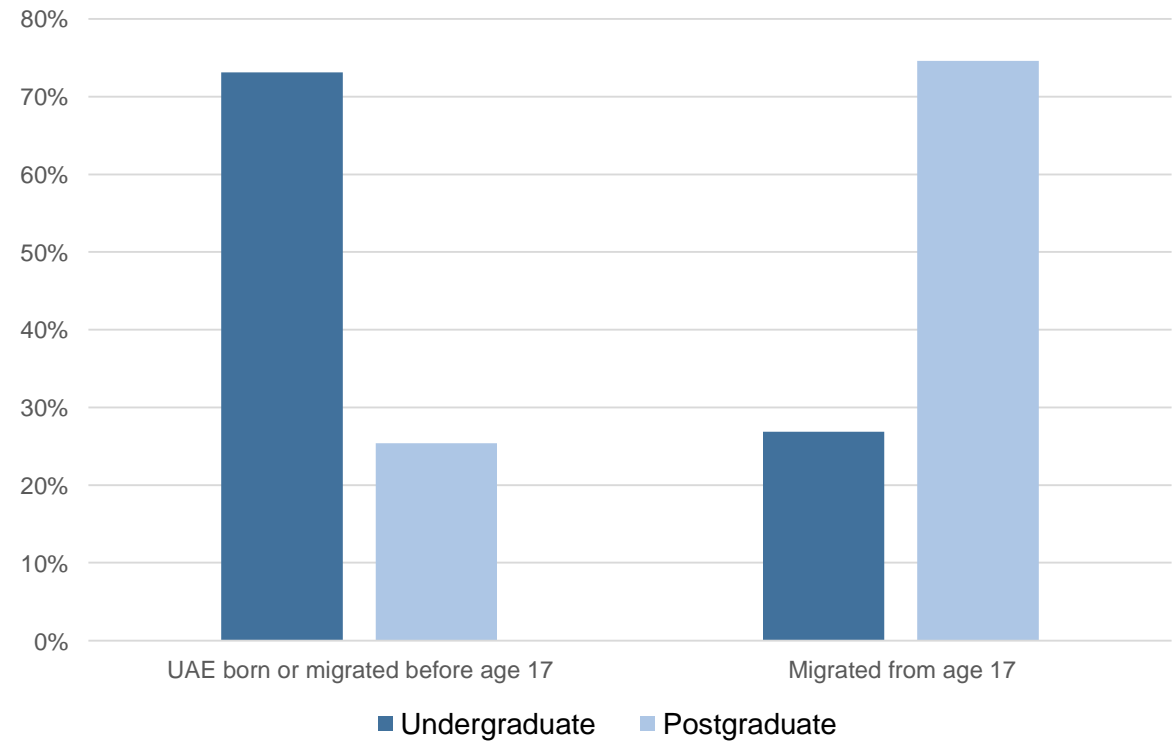
Capabilities and the contribution of HE (the causes of what graduates do)

- Measures of socioeconomic background prior to TNE.
- Engagement with career support.
- Perceived contribution of TNE programme to skills.
- Self-assessed counterfactual earnings.

Key findings (I)

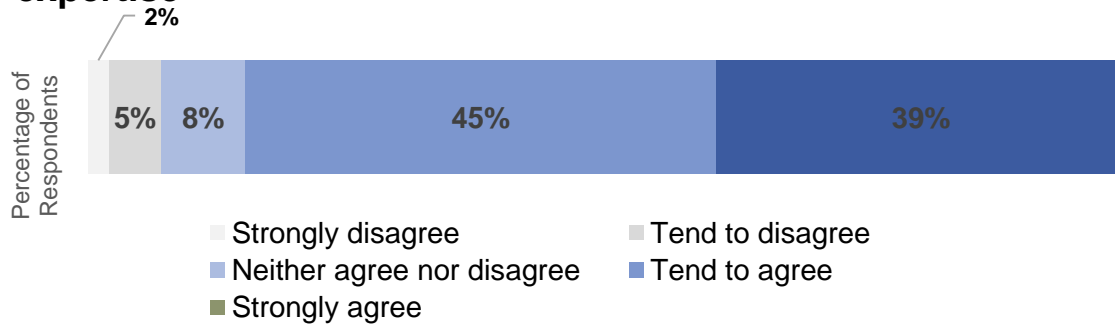
TNE student profile in the UAE

- Highly international and transnational graduate sample
- Majority from traditional HE backgrounds
- Sample proportional to UK TNE provision (66% in business management, 25% in STEM fields)



Key findings (II)

As a result of my course, I have gained specialist knowledge and expertise



“I BECAME MORE OPEN TO A LOT OF DIFFERENT IDEOLOGIES, BELIEFS, THE WAY THAT PEOPLE DO THINGS. I’VE BEEN EXPOSED TO MORE THINGS BECAUSE WE WERE A DIVERSE GROUP OF PEOPLE, AND MY VIEWS ON A LOT OF THINGS CHANGED: RELATIONSHIPS, MARRIAGE, THE WAY PEOPLE LOOK, AND PEOPLE’S OUTLOOK ON LIFE.”

**MALE BAHRAINI NATIONAL,
POSTGRADUATE**

Graduates’ experiences and learning outcomes

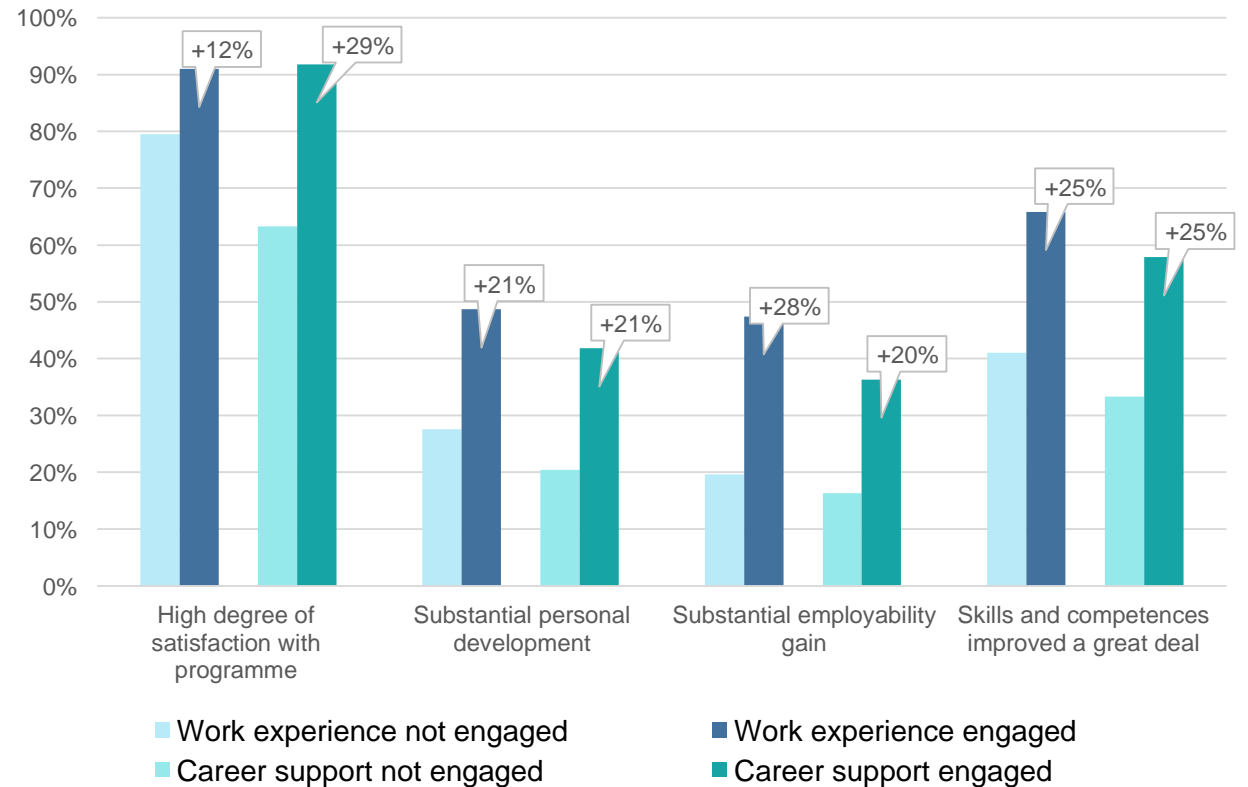
- Very high overall satisfaction with teaching and learning aspects (especially where linked to career support)
- Broad and applied skills development
- Engagements with diversity through multicultural classrooms

Key findings (III)

Employability and labour market outcomes

- 4 out of 5 graduates employed; nearly 9 out of 10 on full-time basis
- 3 out of 5 satisfied with their job
- Strong links between employment status and participation in career support
- Half felt career prospects improved; Undergraduates considerably less optimistic

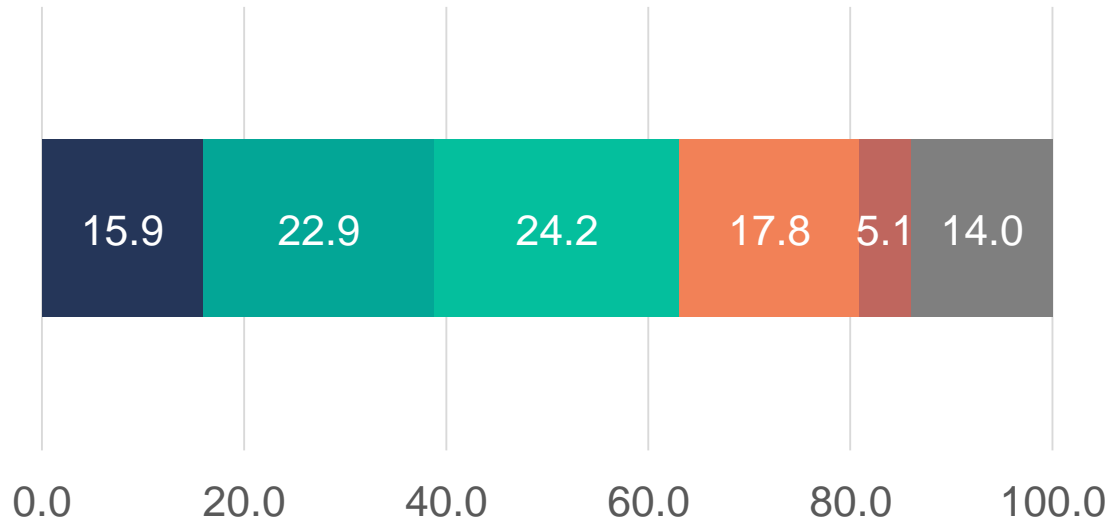
Role of work experience and career support opportunities in programme satisfaction, personal development, employability gain, and skills and competences gain



Key findings (IV)

TNE wage premium:

In your job, how much do you earn compared to others of the same age with similar years of education and work experience?

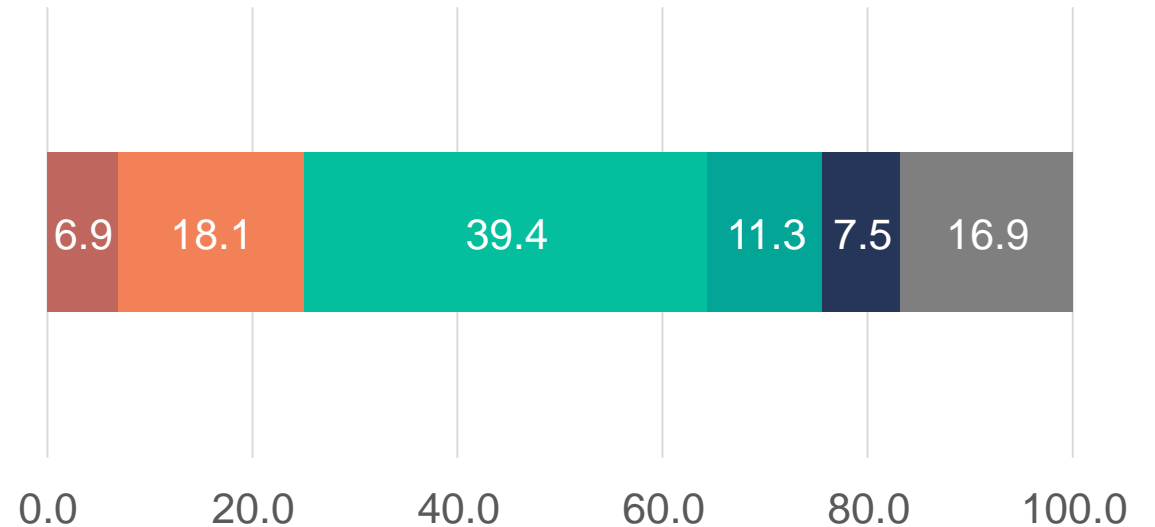


- <30% less
- 6-30% less
- About the same
- 6-30% more
- >30% more
- Don't know

Self-assessed effect of TNE on earnings

TNE wage effect:

In your estimation, if you had pursued the next best alternative, would your earnings have been higher or lower than today?



- >30% lower
- 6-30% lower
- About the same
- 6-30% higher
- >30% higher
- Don't know

Key findings (V)

International mobility

- 15% of graduates now reside in third country; over 50% likely to seek work outside UAE or UK in next 5 years
- Minority of sample took advantage of opportunities to study in UK during course (most were postgraduate and older)
- 1 in 4 experienced degree recognition issues in UAE or overseas

Influence on identity and personal lives



Reflections on the research

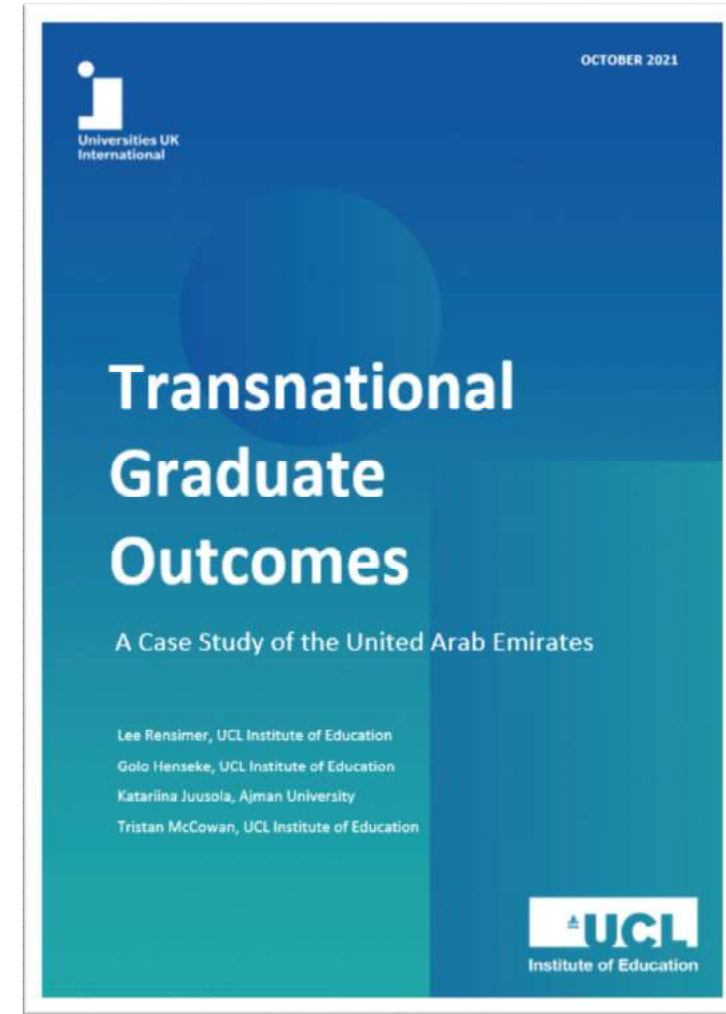
- Questions of scale and timing; integration with existing surveys
- Different operational contexts
- Methodological challenges – practical and theoretical
 - Importance of mixed-methods research strategies
- Impact of global pandemic
- Snapshot within five years after graduation

Acknowledgements

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- 200+ graduate participants
- Leadership at eight UK branch campuses
- Regulatory agencies in Dubai, Ras Al Khaimah and Abu Dhabi



<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/universities-uk-international/insights-and-publications/uuki-publications/transnational-graduate-outcomes-case>